DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 130 918 95 SO 009 420

TITLE Multicultural Planning Conferences: Summary.
INSTITUTION National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Educational Equity Group. Multicultural/Bilingual Div.
PUB DATE Feb 76
NOTE 33p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Bilingual Education; Conference Reports; Cultural Awareness; *Cultural Pluralism; Curriculum Development; Directories; Educational Planning; Educational Research; Elementary Secondary Education; *Ethnic Groups; Ethnic Studies; Higher Education; Language Development; Minority Groups; Professional Recognition; Research Needs; *Research Projects

ABSTRACT

This is a summary report of recommendations made at ten multicultural planning conferences conducted by the National Institute of Education in 1974. The purpose of the conferences was to elicit ideas for developing a research agenda from individuals with diverse backgrounds, all of whom had expertise in working with bicultural or bilingual students. Recommendations in the conferences were for the National Institute of Education to support a variety of activities that were grouped under the following areas: (1) professional participation of minorities in policy formulation and research; (2) research themes and investigations related to cultural pluralism; (3) specific research studies in policy, language acquisition, and assessment; (4) research on curriculum; and (5) research on teacher preparation. The most pervasive theme to emerge from the conferences was that education should acknowledge and promote the pluralistic reality of American society. Included are a directory of conference participants and a listing of recommendations by participation groups. (Author/DB)

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Multicultural/Bilingual Division Multicultural Planning Conferences

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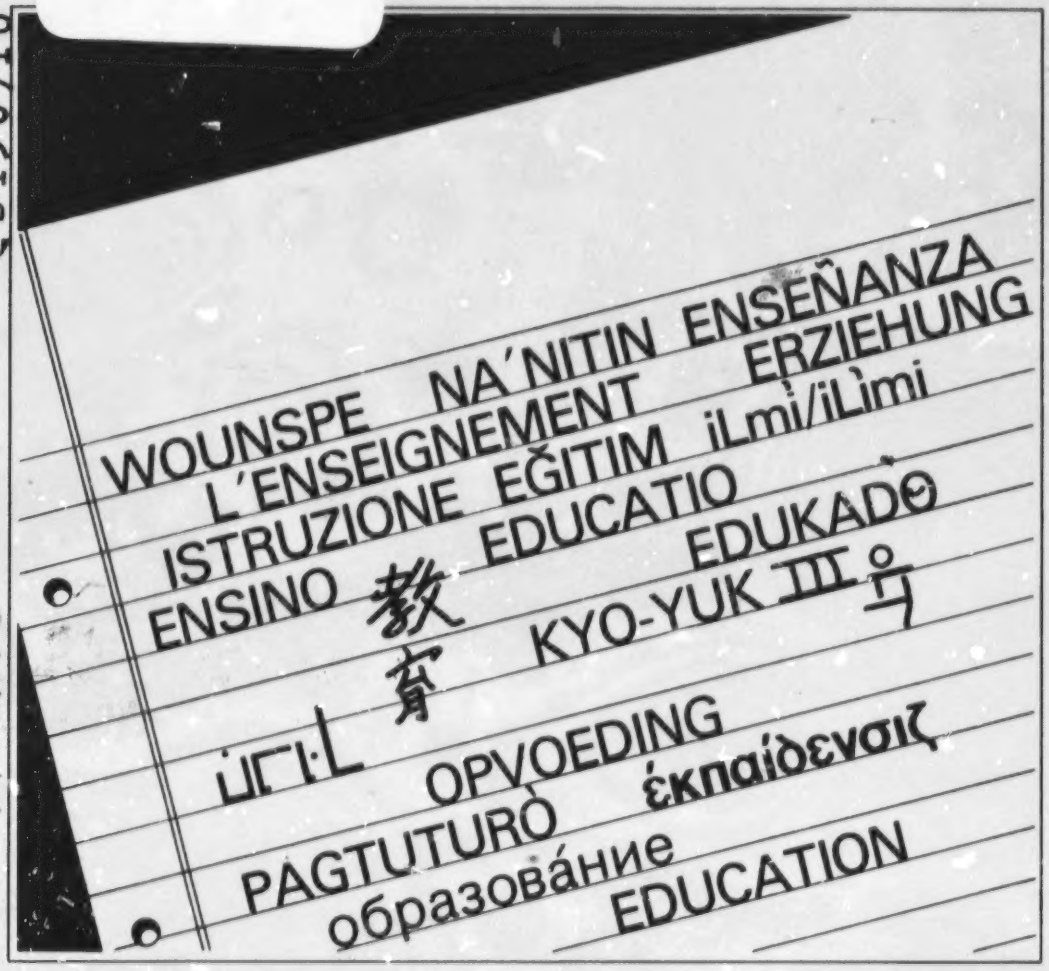

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The National Institute of Education
U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare
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MULTICULTURAL/BILINGUAL DIVISION
MULTICULTURAL PLANNING CONFERENCES

FEBRUARY 1976

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David Mathews, Secretary
Virginia Trotter, Assistant Secretary for Education

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
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Ernest Russell, Acting Associate Director
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INTRODUCTION

The Multicultural Task Force of the National Institute of Education conducted a series of 10 conferences in 1974 as part of a long range planning process. The Multicultural Planning Conferences: Summary report is a synthesis of recommendations that were provided.

The purpose of the conferences was to elicit ideas for developing a research agenda from individuals with diverse backgrounds but all with expertise in working with students who are bicultural or bilingual. The ideas discussed covered a wide range of issues but when reviewed across groups showed a strong pattern of interest in professional participation, cultural pluralism, and a number of specific research issues associated with assessment, language acquisition, curriculum development, and teacher preparation.

The NIE Multicultural/Bilingual Division as successor to the Multicultural Task Force has integrated a number of the recommendations from the conferences into its FY 1976 Program Plan, which is available separately. The recommendations are expected to be integrated more fully as the Division's program expands.

We are grateful for the many helpful suggestions obtained in the conferences and to the excellent contributions of the participants. Although the Summary by no means reflects the richness of the original conference dialogue, we anticipate it distills the essence of the recommendations regarding needs in multicultural/bilingual education. We welcome your comments, particularly those of the participants for errors of interpretation or omission.

J. Michael O'Malley, Acting Chief
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NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
MULTICULTURAL/BILINGUAL DIVISION

MULTICULTURAL PLANNING CONFERENCES

Purpose of the Conferences

The National Institute of Education (NIE) was authorized in 1972 with the mandate to provide every person an equal opportunity to receive a quality education regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or social class. The Multicultural/Bilingual Division (formerly the Multicultural Task Force) of the NIE was established to address educational research needs specifically related to diverse cultural and linguistic groups represented in the nation.

Since its inception, NIE has sought to elicit ideas from a diversity of concerned individuals in the development of its research activities. Consistent with this policy, in 1974 the Multicultural/Bilingual Division sponsored a series of 10 conferences in which individuals or various ethnic/cultural groups were assembled for the purpose of identifying research needs and priorities to guide the Institute in its planning and future funding. Each conference, with two exceptions, was comprised of individuals of the same ethnic/cultural groups who represented an extensive array of professional and lay interests. The exceptions were conferences composed of individuals with considerable ethnic diversity representing a number of professional organizations. The primary focus of each conference was the educational needs and problems confronting the participants' particular ethnic/cultural groups.

Structure

The Chairperson of each conference was identified for having assumed a major role in promoting ethnically or culturally related educational reforms. Participants were selected to represent a diverse array of professional or lay interests and views. Included were representatives from the federal government; state, county, or territorial governments; college and university administration and academic departments, both faculty and students; professional associations; public or private schools; special interest groups; and research groups. Among the 185 participants were over 15 individuals with academic or administration positions at or above department chairman including deans and university presidents, and nine presidents or executive directors of professional or lay special interest groups, not to mention the many other exceptionally qualified professionals and lay individuals who devoted their energies to the conferences.

Almost one-third of the conferees were women. Sixty-two percent of all conferees represented institutions of higher education owing to the emphasis at the conference on research findings and planning. Input about program implementation and classroom practice was provided by primary and secondary school teachers and representatives from state and local education agencies.*

The meetings were structured to permit a presentation by each participant, and discussion within small working groups based on interests or in some cases subethnicities (e.g., Asian-Americans broke up into Koreans, Chinese, Japanese, etc.). The participants then assembled as a group for the purpose of formulating a final research agenda. Each conference chairperson was responsible for providing NIE with a written summary of the participants' views and recommendations.

Transcripts and notes of these conferences and the final reports submitted by the conference chairpersons offered literally hundreds of valuable ideas and recommendations. The purpose of the following section of this report is to synthesize the major research concerns delineated by the conferences.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The issues addressed at the conference may be classified into three broad concerns: professional participation, research themes, and research issues. The discussion of professional participation encourages greater minority participation in federal decision making affecting minority researchers, practitioners, and consumers of education and research. Research themes are general concerns that pervade the application of research techniques to educational problems. Research issues are substantive problems confronted by educational practitioners toward which research and development might be usefully directed.**

Professional Participation

A major recommendation of the conferences was for an increased role in policy formulation affecting members of ethnic minorities. Problems were cited in previous exclusion of minorities from federal decision-making roles that result in inaccurate portrayal of minority communities,

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* For list of conferences, dates convened, conference location and names and addresses of participants, see Attachment A; and for an analysis of occupational backgrounds of the participants, see Attachment B.

** For an analysis of recommendations by participating groups, see Attachment C.

pejorative or "deficit" depictions of minority children, and suspicion and unwillingness of minorities to participate in research and development. To avoid these problems in the future and to assure a more accurate statement of research needs, a range of alternative strategies was recommended.

Direct Minority Participation. An affirmative action policy should be followed as a means of assuring selection of qualified candidates for positions within the Institute. Appropriate weight should be allowed in selection for experience in working directly with linguistic and ethnic minorities. By faithfully following these procedures, the Institute will be assured direct minority participation in federal decision making on the full range of issues affecting minorities.

Minority Consultant Participation. Selection of consultants or consultant groups with experience and active participation in conducting research with minorities should supplement direct minority participation in Institute activities. Minority consultants should be used for a diverse range of activities including review of planning, proposals, and funded projects.

Support for Minority Researchers and Consortia. Increased support should be provided for minority researchers through the various funding mechanisms available to NIE, including competition on contracts and unsolicited research proposals. Furthermore, the Institute should consider support for minority research consortia, research centers, and other joint minority research ventures.

Minority Training and Support for Higher Education. A critical shortage of professionally trained educators and researchers can be partially ameliorated with support by NIE for graduate fellowships and institutions of higher education or announcement of opportunities for minority training in higher education. Investigation was suggested of patterns of factors leading to success and failure among minority students in higher education.

Research Themes

Perhaps the most pervasive theme to emerge from the conferences was that education acknowledge and promote the pluralistic reality of American society. A pluralistic or multicultural view was encouraged to advance beyond the assimilationist of "melting pot" model. Multicultural education recognizes the need for all children to learn mainstream culture skills, yet uses the ethnic heritage of the student to support and sustain the interest and self-esteem of the students. Furthermore, multicultural education enhances the achievement of

culturally and linguistically different children while benefiting all children by exposing them from an early age to the varieties of life styles, values, and languages which characterize different ethnic groups.

Specific studies recommended in this area were the following:

- o A definition of multicultural education and public policies or educator roles needed to promote multicultural education in the schools
- o Examination of approaches to multicultural education
- o Analysis of the impact of communications media and societal institutions on multiculturalism in America
- o Development of ethnic group profiles including analysis of values, life styles, and language characteristics
- o Analysis of potential roles for consumers (parents) in education to assure expression of priority interest and to distribute control over education.

Research Issues

Research to benefit ethnic and linguistic minorities was the focus of the conferences. Generally a variety of strategies was encouraged as a means of approaching problems as contrasted with popularized approaches identified with individual researchers. For convenience the issues and recommendations will be grouped under five headings: policy studies, linguistic research, research on curriculum, research on teacher preparation, and research on assessment.

Policy Studies. Policy studies recommended at the conferences were to explore alternatives to existing mechanisms for school finance and to identify consumer goals for bilingual education.

- o Analysis of equitable procedures for school finance, as warranted under court decisions in Texas and California
- o Analysis of goals and attitudes of linguistic and cultural minorities toward bilingual education.

Linguistic Research. Emphasis was placed in the conferences on the role of language in educational settings and the special problems of children with limited-English speaking ability. The focus was particularly on the relationship between the process of second

language learning and sociolinguistic characteristics of different linguistic minorities, with consideration of background factors such as attitudes and first language oral capabilities. Among the specific research projects recommended were:

- o Research on the process of second language acquisition, attitudes toward and motivation for second language learning, sociolinguistic characteristics of different linguistic minorities, and the relationship between intellectual ability and second language learning

- o Evaluation of oral language capabilities of young children

- o Influence of TV on language acquisition by young children

- o Studies of verbal behavior of young children.

Research on Curriculum. Of major concern to many participants was the development and evaluation of curricula for minority children. Three interests predominated throughout the various activities suggested: identification of exemplary programs, adaptation to cultural characteristics of students, and dissemination. Under these three general headings, specific projects recommended were as follows:

- o Exemplary programs

  - research on successful bilingual program practices

- o Cultural adaptation

  - development of curricula reflecting cultures, life styles, and values of different ethnic/cultural groups

  - research to identify cultural learning styles of cultural minorities and to adapt curricula accordingly

  - development of individualized instructional models tailored to the needs of bilingual/bicultural children

  - analysis of approaches to encouraging motivation including the influence of cultural variables on learner motivation, attitudes, and expectations

  - analysis of approaches to encouraging self-esteem and how self-esteem develops in a cultural context

- studies of learning in non-school settings.

o Dissemination

- studies of distribution and marketing of curriculum materials and implications for multicultural/ bilingual materials, which are often "thin market."

Research on Teacher Preparation. The dramatic shortage of teachers in bilingual education requires major initiatives for both in-service and pre-service preparation. However, key teacher behaviors that are instrumental in effecting gains for bilingual/bicultural children cannot be educed from presently available research. Consequently, conferees were concerned that further research employ innovative techniques and suggested studies such as the following:

o Research to identify teacher competencies and characteristics correlated with high achievement of linguistic and cultural minorities

o Studies of teacher interactions crossing cultural lines.

Research on Assessment. Evaluation has been applied in at least three contexts with minority children: to establish ethnic profiles; to diagnose student needs and monitor performance; and to evaluate instructional programs. With few exceptions, minority children are noted to perform less capably than others irrespective of the context in which evaluation has been conducted. However, substantial evidence illustrates, for reasons of language and cultural inappropriateness, the bias inherent in most assessment instruments used in these studies. Conference participants, in reflecting on this evidence, suggested the following investigations in the assessment area:

o Research on bias in standardized tests and implications for minorities

o Development of criterion-referenced tests to evaluate student performance

o Development of diagnostic tests to evaluate student needs

o Research on the use of career interest inventories with minorities

o Analyses of psychological, sociological, and educational characteristics of children who perform well on standardized tests.

Summary

The 10 multicultural planning conferences drew participation from linguistic and ethnic minorities across professional levels and backgrounds. Recommendations in the conferences were for the National Institute of Education to support a variety of activities that were grouped under the following areas: (a) professional participation of minorities in policy formulation and research; (b) research themes and investigations related to cultural pluralism; (c) specific research studies in policy, language acquisition, and assessment; (d) research on curriculum; and (e) research on teacher preparation.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Selected recommendations from the minority conferences have been integrated into ongoing plans formulated by the Multicultural/ Bilingual Division. Recommendations were identified that fall within the mandate of the National Institute of Education authorizing legislation and then prioritized for consensus across participating groups and for consistency with recommendations received from other sources, primarily the mandate of the Bilingual Education Act of 1974, and needs expressed through DHEW by local education agencies resulting from programmatic requirements, legislative actions, or court decisions. Plans of the NIE Multicultural/Bilingual Division for FY 1976 and 1977 reflect these sources of influence.

ATTACHMENT A

Names and Addresses of Conference Participants, Dates Convened, Conference Locations and NIE Staff Coordinator.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS CONFERENCE

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Washington, D.C.

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ASIAN AMERICAN CONFERENCE

April 15-16, 1974
San Francisco, California

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April 22-23, 1974
Silver Spring, Maryland

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May 2-3, 1974
Silver Spring, Maryland

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MEXICAN-AMERICAN CONFERENCE I

May 18-19, 1974
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New York City, New York

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ATTACHMENTS B AND C

Identification of Occupational Backgrounds, and Recommendations of Participants by Conference

ATTACHMENT B

MULTIETHNIC CONFERENCES PARTICIPANT ENUMERATION
BY OCCUPATION OR AFFILIATION

	*Conferences										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTALS
City or County Government			1	1							2
Advisory to State or Federal Government	1	1	1								3
State Government			1				3				4
Federal Government	2	1		1			2	4			10
University or College Administration	1	2			1	4		14	4		26
University or College Academic	2	5	4	7	4	13	3	16	15	8	79
University or College Student		1	2		1	2	3				9
Professional Association	3					1	1			2	7
Public or Private School	3	2		1		1			2	1	10
Special Interest Group			3	3		1	1	8	4	3	23
Territorial or Commonwealth Government									1		1
Research Groups	1		2	1	1		2	2	1	1	11
Number of Participants	13	12	14	14	7	22	15	44	27	15	185

* Key:
1. Professional Organizations
2. Asian-American
3. White Ethnics
4. Puerto Rican-Americans
5. Mexican-Americans #1
6. Black Scholars
7. Native Americans
8. Mexican-Americans #2
9. Hawaii Conference
10. Puerto Rican-American Island

ATTACHMENT C

MULTICULTURAL PLANNING CONFERENCES

Recommendation by Participation Groups

	CODE								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Policy Involvement and Professional Participation									
1. Direct minority participation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. Minority consultant participation		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
3. Support for minority researchers and consortia	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4. Minority training and support for higher education		X	X		X	X	X	X	
Research Themes									
1. Definition of multicultural education and policy to promote multicultural education	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. Examination of approaches to bilingual education		X	X			X			
3. Analysis of impact of American institutions on cultural minorities		X	X			X			
4. Analysis of potential roles for consumers in education			X		X	X			

CODE KEY

1. Professional Organization
2. Asian Americans
3. Chicanos
4. Poly-ethnic Whites
5. Blacks
6. Puerto Ricans
7. Native American
8. Island Puerto Ricans
9. Hawaii Americans

	CODE								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Research Issues - Policy Studies									
1. Analysis of equitable procedures for school finance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. Analysis of goals and attitudes toward bilingual education		X	X			X			
Research Issues - Linguistic Research									
1. Process of second language acquisition	X		X						
2. Studies of sociolinguistic characteristics of different ethnic populations	X		X	X		X			X
3. Evaluation of oral language capabilities of children		X							
4. Influence of TV on language acquisition by children		X	X		X				
5. Studies of verbal behavior of children		X				X			X
Research Issue - Curriculum Development									
1. Exemplary Programs									
Research on successful bilingual program practices		X	X			X	X	X	X
2. Cultural Adaptation									
Development of culturally relevant curricula		X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Research on cultural learning styles of minorities	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
Development of individualized instructional models tailored to needs of bilingual/bicultural children			X		X	X			X

	CODE								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Analysis of approaches to encouraging motivation	X	X			X		X		X
Analysis of approaches to encouraging self-esteem	X	X			X		X		
Studies of learning in non-school settings		X			X	X			
3. Dissemination									
Studies of distribution and marketing of curriculum materials and applications for bilingual/bicultural materials	X	X		X			X		
Research Issues - Teacher Preparation									
1. Research to identify teacher competencies and characteristics correlated with high achievement of linguistic and cultural minorities	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. Studies of teacher interactions across cultural lines	X								
Research Issues - Assessment									
1. Research on bias in standardized tests	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. Development of criterion referenced tests to evaluate student performance			X						
3. Development of diagnostic tests to evaluate student needs			X						
4. Research on use of career interest inventories with minorities		X	X						
5. Analysis of psychological sociological and educational characteristics of children who perform well on standardized tests					X	X			